

Graduating senior honors grandfather at Top 10 Dinner

- By RICK GREEN, THE LACONIA DAILY SUN
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Renee Corriveau and her grandfather, retired teacher Marc Corriveau, at the Laconia High School Class of 2019 Top 10 dinner Thursday night.

LACONIA — Renee Corriveau, salutatorian for the Laconia High School Class of 2019, held the audience in rapt attention Thursday night with an emotional speech describing the teacher in her life.

He was there to help her study, listen to her vent, provide a snack and encourage her to follow her dreams in a surprising academic path that will take her far from home.

Renee was describing her grandfather, Marc Corriveau, who retired as a calculus teacher at the school after her freshman year.

Marc Corriveau used the words of Dr. Seuss to introduce his granddaughter to those at a banquet in the Huot Career and Technical Center to honor the school's top 10 graduating seniors:

“Be who you are and say what you feel because in the end those who matter don’t mind and those who mind don’t matter.”

When she took the podium, Renee admitted to some strong feelings.

“Corriveaus don’t cry, but I just came pretty close.”

She described her first day of high school, sitting on top of a desk in the math wing, talking to her grandpa at his desk in the corner.

“The bell rang, I grabbed a hug and ran off to class,” she said. “Grandpa followed me into the hall.

“The next morning The Daily Sun printed an article about the first day of school and on the front page was a picture of Mr. Marc Corriveau, calculus teacher at Laconia High School, standing at the corner of the hallway with a packet of review problems and a big smile.”

He was in his spot, the place where he could be heard whistling a song every morning.

Just as reliable as his morning whistle was his support for his granddaughter.

“Every day, without fail, he was there for me,” Renee said. “Last-minute study sessions at his desk going over flash cards, mid-day hunger when I would sneak in and steal from his lunch box, picking up the algebra textbook I stored in his room because it was too heavy to carry all day, bad days when I needed a hug, good days when I needed a hug.”

The next year, he retired and she had to buy a bigger backpack to carry all her books.

“But everyday, I went home to find him waiting with a snack, ready to listen to me vent about my day,” she said. “Long hours were spent helping me through my homework, studying for tests, and not just for math.”

In her junior year, life took a turn. Renee discovered what she wanted to pursue in college.

“My whole life, people had been telling me I was destined to become a teacher.

“Look at my family, they said, look at my grandfather. Yes, math was my future if not as a teacher then an engineer or a doctor.”

But Renee suddenly realized she wanted something else.

“I wanted to make movies,” she said. “It meant so much to me that my grandpa, the man who knew more than anyone my aptitude for math or teaching, supported my choice.”

He was there for her as she navigated a new academic path.